



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY ANTHONY J. JENKINS AND KELLY  
JOHNSON, ASSISTANT A.G., ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES DIVISION OF THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, ANNOUNCE THE  
THE CONVICTION OF TWO MEN FOR VIOLATION OF THE CLEAN AIR ACT**

Anthony J. Jenkins, U.S. Attorney for the District of the Virgin Islands and Kelly Johnson, Assistant Attorney General for the Environmental and Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Justice Department, today announced that Cleve Allen George, of St. Thomas, U.S.V.I., and Dylan C. Starnes, of Atlanta, Georgia, were convicted yesterday for their involvement in the removal of asbestos during the demolition at the Donoe Housing Community in January and February 2001. George and Starnes were convicted for their failure to properly remove the asbestos and for filing false air monitoring reports with the Virgin Islands Housing Authority and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

These convictions are part of an initiative by the Environmental Crimes Section of the Department of Justice to identify and single out for prosecution the nation's most egregious workplace safety violators. The goal of the new initiative is to improve workplace safety, simply by applying existing laws to an arena that historically has suffered from weak enforcement

options and reluctance to pursue those options. Environmental crimes, such as these, place workers in jeopardy of serious harm or death. Under the new initiative, employers who ignore environmental laws and place their workers at risk can expect to be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

United States Attorney Jenkins stated that justice has been done by the convictions of these individuals for violation of the Clean Air Act. Their actions disregarded the safety of members of our community.

George and Starnes have worked in the asbestos abatement industry for over ten years, Starnes as an instructor in the Atlanta area. These reports falsely indicated that the air quality in the work area was safe, when in fact no air monitoring was conducted.

Under federal and territorial law, individuals who intend to work on asbestos abatement projects are required to undergo an extensive training course instructing them how to properly and safely remove asbestos waste without contaminating either themselves, co-workers, or members of the public.

Asbestos has been designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Congress in the Clean Air Act as a hazardous air pollutant. It causes a wide range of illnesses, including various forms of cancer and asbestosis, a usually fatal lung disease. The EPA has determined that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos.

Sentencing for both defendants is scheduled for November 2, 2005. They face a maximum penalty of 5 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on each count. George was convicted on sixteen counts, and Starnes on fifteen.

U.S. Attorney Jenkins and Assistant Attorney General Johnson thanked and congratulated Leonard Reed and the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources who initiated the case, and the Criminal Investigative Division of the Environmental Protection Agency who assisted in the investigation.

